
Opening A New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case

This document describes the process of opening a new bankruptcy case in CM/ECF. It is assumed the user has an assigned user name and password.

Assistance with common technical matters is available on the Courts website at <http://www.ilsb.uscourts.gov/cmecffaq.shtm> or by calling the helpdesk at (618) 482-9075. Forms are available on the Court's website: <http://www.ilsb.uscourts.gov/procforms.shtm>

STEP 1 Login To CM/ECF

- Use Internet Explorer 5.5 or greater to access one of the following CM/ECF links:
 - **Train** CM/ECF: <http://ecf-train.ilsb.uscourts.gov>
 - **Live** CM/ECF: <http://ecf.ilsb.uscourts.gov>
- Click the “Southern District of Illinois – Document Filing System...” hyperlink. (See Figure A.)
- Enter your assigned login and password. The “client code” is not necessary for filing documents. Click Login. (See Figure B.)



Figure A

Authentication

Login:

Password:

client code:

Figure B

STEP 2 CM/ECF Main Interface

- Once logged in, the important announcements page displays. Click Bankruptcy. Note the Bankruptcy main interface is divided into two sections: (1) Main Menu (2) Events. (See Figure C.)

ECF Bankruptcy • Adversary • Query • Reports • Utilities • Logout ? ECF Guide

Bankruptcy Events

[Answer/Response...](#)

[Appeal](#)

[Batch Filings](#)

[CaseUpLoad](#)

[Claim Actions](#)

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Menu (points to the top right area)

Events (points to the list of links)

Figure C

STEP 3 Case Data Screen

- Click Open a BK Case on the Bankruptcy Events screen. The Open New Bankruptcy Case screen displays. (See Figure D.)
- Chapter:** Select the appropriate chapter.
- Joint Petition:** Select “y” (yes) if the petition is a joint petition – the default is “n” (no).

- **Deficiencies:** Select “y” (yes) if any required documents are missing from the petition – the default is “n” (no).
- Verify the accuracy of the selected options. Click Next.

Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case

Case type bk

Date filed 7/18/2006

Chapter 7

Joint Petition n

Deficiencies n

Next Clear

Figure D

STEP 4 Debtor Search Screen

- The Debtor Search screen is used to add debtors or joint debtors to a case.

Search Hints:

- Search by: Social Security number, tax identification number, last name or business name.
- If a search yields numerous results, enter a first name and/or middle name to limit search results.
- The business name should be entered in the Last/Business name field.
- Enter one search term at a time.
- Try alternate search terms if the first search is unsuccessful.
- Include hyphens in Social Security numbers and tax identification numbers (xxx-xx-xxxx / xx-xxxxxxx).
- Partial names can be used – wild cards may be used before or within search terms (*mith) (Sm?th).

NOTE: It is important to search CM/ECF for an existing party before adding a new party.

- Enter any of the search terms listed above. Click Search.
- **Parties found:** Click each of the names to display the party’s address information for verification. (See Figure E.) Once the correct party has been located, highlight the party in the list and click Select name from the list.

- **Parties found:** If the party is not found in CM/ECF, a No person found message will display. (See Figure F.) Perform another party search using an alternative search term. For example, if using the last name did not generate any results, search using the social security number. If the party is not found in CM/ECF, click Create New Party.

Search for a debtor

SSN Tax Id

Last/Business name

First Name

Middle Name

Party search results

- Smith, Barney O.
- Smith, Beau T.
- Smith, Ben**
- Smith, Ben
- Smith, Bobby Gene
- Smith, Brad

<https://ecf-test...>

Ben Smith
100 Somewhere Street
Anywhere, IL 62223
County: St Clair

Internet

Figure E

Search for a debtor

SSN Tax Id

Last/Business name

First Name

Middle Name

Party search results

No person found.

Figure F

STEP 5 Debtor Information Screen

- Enter/edit the following information on the Debtor Information Screen: (See Figure G.)
 - **Last name (Business), First name, Middle name, and Generation (if applicable):** Do not use punctuation when abbreviating the middle name or generation. Punctuation should not be included except as specifically outlined in the [Style Guide](#). The name fields are not available for editing if the party was selected from the party search results.
 - **SSN or Tax ID:** Enter the Social Security in the following format if the debtor is an individual: xxx-xx-xxxx. If the debtor is a business, enter the Tax Identification number in the following format: xx-xxxxxxx.
 - **Address(es) 1-3:** Enter the street address(es) using the correct abbreviations as outlined in the [Style Guide](#). Do not use punctuation.
 - **City, State, Zip, County:** Enter the debtor's city, state, zip code, and county of residence.
- Click the Alias... button if the party has an alias. Enter the applicable alias(es) and choose the correct role type(s). Click Add aliases. The Debtor Information screen reappears.

NOTE: The Corporate parent... and Review... buttons are not being used at this time.

- Verify the Debtor information. Click Submit.

| Debtor Information | | | |
|--|--|------------|---|
| Last name | <input type="text" value="Smith"/> | First name | <input type="text" value="Jane"/> |
| Middle name | <input type="text" value="T"/> | Generation | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="text" value="Title"/> | | |
| SSN | <input type="text" value="999-99-9999"/> 222-11-1234 | Tax ID | <input type="text"/> |
| Office | <input type="text"/> | Address 1 | <input type="text" value="123 Anywher Dr"/> |
| Address 2 | <input type="text" value="Suite 200"/> | Address 3 | <input type="text"/> |
| City | <input type="text" value="Anywhere"/> | State | <input type="text" value="IL"/> |
| | | Zip | <input type="text" value="62201"/> |
| County | <input type="text" value="St Clair"/> ▼ | Country | <input type="text"/> |
| Phone | <input type="text"/> | Fax | <input type="text"/> |
| E-mail | <input type="text"/> | | |
| Party text | <input type="text"/> | | |
| <input type="button" value="Alias..."/> <input type="button" value="Corporate parent..."/> <input type="button" value="Review..."/> Add all aliases and corporate parents before clicking the Submit button. | | | |
| <input type="button" value="Submit"/> <input type="button" value="Cancel"/> <input type="button" value="Clear"/> | | | |

Figure G

STEP 6 Divisional Office Code Screen

- The Divisional Office Code Screen confirms the assignment of the divisional office. The assignment is based on the debtor's county code. (See Figure H.)
- Click Next.

NOTE: If this is a joint petition, the Joint Debtor Search screen will display next. Perform STEPS 4 – 5 using the Joint Debtor's information.

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Divisional Office is set to East St Louis based on the county code 17163 of the debtor | |
| <input type="button" value="Next"/> | <input type="button" value="Clear"/> |

Figure H

STEP 7 Statistical Data Screen

- Make the following selections on the Statistical Data Screen: (See Figure I.)
 - Type of Debtor:** Select the type of debtor by clicking the appropriate box(es). If the petition is marked health care business, place a checkmark next to Health Care Business.

NOTE: If the debtor is a business, remove the checkmark next to individual. If the Health Care Business box is checked, the case must be opened with the Nature of debt as business. If the new case being filed is a Chapter 7 case, the filer will not receive the Presumption Arises drop-down menu.

- **Fee status:** The Fee Status values are Paid, Installment, fee not paid, and IFP filing fee waived. If the petition is accompanied by an Application to Pay Filing Fees in the installments, select Installment from the pick list box. The default value is Paid.
- **Nature of debt:** Select Consumer or Business – the default is consumer. If the new case being filed is a Chapter 7 case with individual debtors, the Nature of debt must reflect consumer. If business is incorrectly selected, the filer will not receive the Presumption Arises drop-down menu.

NOTE: Select Business for Chapters 7 and 11 cases where the debtor is actually a business. Always select Business for Chapter 12 cases. Always select Consumer for Chapter 13 cases.

- **Asset notice:** Select Yes or No – the default is No.

NOTE: Select No for Chapter 7 cases. Select Yes for Chapters 11, 12, 13, 9 cases.

- **Estimated number of creditors:** Select the appropriate range of estimated creditors.
- **Estimated assets, Estimated debts:** Select the correct dollar ranges.
- Verify the accuracy of the statistical data. Click Next.
- Note the installment payment reminder. Click Next. (See Figure J).

Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case

Fee status:

Nature of debt:

Asset notice:

Estimated number of creditors:

Estimated assets:

Estimated debts:

Type of debtor
☒ Individual
☐ Corporation (includes LLC & LLP)
☐ Partnership
☐ Other

☐ Health Care Business
☐ Single Asset Real Estate
☐ Railroad
☐ Stockbroker
☐ Commodity Broker
☐ Clearing Bank
☐ Nonprofit Organization

Figure I

Open New Bankruptcy Case

If this is an Installment Payment Case, Enter the fee amount to be paid with the filing (MINIMUM OF 54.00) and docket Application to Pay in Installments Next.

Figure J

STEP 8 Deficiency List Screen

- If deficiencies were denoted in STEP 3, the Deficiency List Screen will display. (See Figure K).
- Place a checkmark next to each item that is not included with the petition.
- Click Next.

Deficiency List

*Check item(s) **NOT** included in the petition*

- ☐ Decl of Bankruptcy Preparer
- ☐ Summary of Schedules
- ☐ Schedule A
- ☐ Schedule B
- ☐ Schedule C
- ☐ Schedule D
- ☐ Schedule E
- ☐ Schedule F
- ☐ Schedule G
- ☐ Schedule H
- ☐ Schedule I
- ☐ Schedule J
- ☐ Schedule A-J
- ☐ Unsworn Decl Concerning Schs
- ☐ Statement of Affairs
- ☐ Disclosure of Atty Comp.
- ☐ Corporate Ownership Statement
- ☐ Means Test Form Chapter 7
- ☐ Cert of Credit Counseling
- ☐ Signature of Petition Preparer
- ☐ Petition Preparer Ntc to Db
- ☐ Employee Income Record Due

Figure K

STEP 9 PDF Upload Screen

- The PDF Upload Screen is used to transfer an Adobe Acrobat PDF version of the petition to the Bankruptcy Court. This PDF document will be associated with the bankruptcy filing. (See Figure L.)
- Click Browse.
- Change “Files of type:” to All Files (*.*). (See Figure M.)
- Change “Look in:” to the directory on your computer containing the PDF version of the petition.
- Right-click the filename of the petition. Click Open. Verify the selected petition is the correct petition. Close Acrobat.

NOTE: It is important to verify the correct petition is selected.

- Click Open.
- Do not change the Attachments to Document radio button. Click Next.
(See Figure N.)

NOTE: Use of the attachment button is prohibited.

- Click Next.

Select the **pdf** document (for example: C:\199cv501-21.pdf).

Filename

Attachments to Document: ☒ No ☐ Yes

Figure L

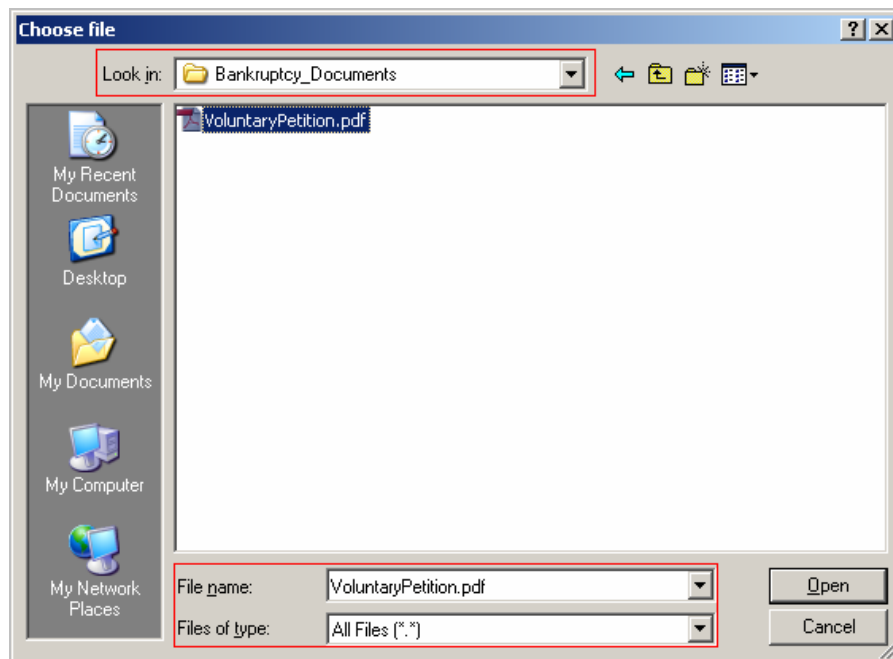


Figure M

Attachments to Document: ☒ No ☐ Yes

Figure N

STEP 10 Fee Due Screen

- The Fee Due Screen displays the bankruptcy filing fee due. Note the fee amount.
- Click Next.

NOTE: This screen will not display if the bankruptcy is a chapter 7 petition with deficiencies. Rather, the fee will display in a combined screen as indicated in STEP 11.

STEP 11 Incomplete Filings Deadlines Screen

- If petition is deficient, as denoted in STEP 3, the Incomplete Filings Deadlines Screen will display. The date listed is the deadline for filing the missing documents. The date will print on the final docket text. (See Figure O.)
- Click Next.



Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case

Incomplete Filings due date: 08/3/2006

Appropriate Fee Due Displayed Here

Figure O

STEP 12 Government Proof of Claim Deadline Screen

- The Government Proof of Claim Deadline Screen will display if the petition is a chapter 13.
- Click Next.

STEP 13 Presumption Arises Screen

- The Presumption Arises Screen is used to specify if a presumption of abuse arises under the means test. This screen will display for individual chapter 7 cases. (See Figure P.)

- **Presumption Arises:** Select no or yes – the default is no.

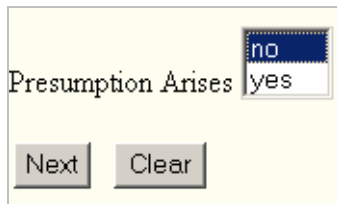


Figure P

STEP 14 Modify Docket Text Screen

- The Modify Docket Text Screen is used to modify the docket text associated with the petition. Modify the docket text when necessary. (See Figure Q.)
- Click Next.

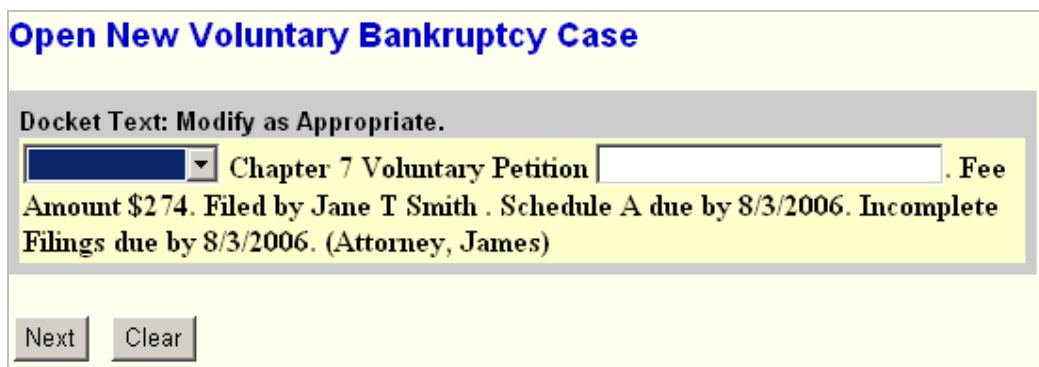


Figure Q

STEP 15 Final Submission Screen

- The Final Submission Screen represents the last opportunity to make changes before the case is officially filed. (See Figure R.)
- Review this screen carefully. If the docket text is incorrect, click the browser Back button one or more times to find the screen to be modified, make the correction, and continue through the event. To abort the entire transaction, click Bankruptcy on the main menu.
- Click Next.

Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case

Docket Text: Final Text

Chapter 7 Voluntary Petition . Fee Amount \$274. Filed by Jane T Smith. Schedule A due by 8/3/2006. Incomplete Filings due by 8/3/2006. (Attorney, James)

Attention!! Submitting this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this submission if you continue.

Figure R

STEP 16 Notice of Electronic Filing Screen

- The Notice of Electronic Filing Screen is verification that the filing has been sent electronically to CM/ECF. It certifies that the petition is now an official court document. This screen may be printed if desired. (See Figure S.)
- Note the case number. The case number may be clicked to access (via PACER) the docket sheet.
- Note the document number. The document number may be clicked to access (via PACER) the PDF version of the petition.
- The Notice of Bankruptcy Case Filing may be clicked to access (via PACER) a notice summarizing the pertinent details and participants of the case. (See Figure T.)

NOTE: The Notice of Bankruptcy Case Filing will NOT initially include judge and trustee information. Therefore, this notice may be produced after the judge and trustee have been assigned to the case.

Open New Voluntary Bankruptcy Case

U.S. Bankruptcy Court

Southern District of Illinois

Notice of Bankruptcy Case Filing

The following transaction was received from Attorney, James P entered on 7/19/2006 at 10:06 AM CDT and filed on 7/19/2006

Case Name: Jane T Smith

Case Number: [06-30006](#)

Document Number: [1](#)

Docket Text:

Chapter 7 Voluntary Petition . Fee Amount \$274. Filed by Jane T Smith. Schedule A due by 8/3/2006. Incomplete Filings due by 8/3/2006. (Attorney, James)

The following document(s) are associated with this transaction:

Document description: Main Document

Original filename: M:\pdfdocs\atytraining\VoluntaryPetition.pdf

Electronic document Stamp:

[STAMP bkecfStamp_ID=997368747 [Date=7/19/2006] [FileNumber=42411-0] [2a9c8921ca7656d4bb085fb6a1e89562af0d114e3cd1b11f7f9d221692ebd7c733bf4936ed84579d71832098c8f6a97481a6e0a47d2fa751fa1c19a117b84411]]

06-30006 Notice will be electronically mailed to:

Figure S

Notice of Bankruptcy Case Filing

A bankruptcy case concerning the debtor(s) listed below was filed under Chapter 7 of the United States Bankruptcy Code, entered on 07/19/2006 at 10:06 AM and filed on 07/19/2006.

Jane T Smith
123 Anywher Dr
Suite 200
Anywhere, IL 62201
SSN: xxx-xx-9999

The case was filed by the debtor's attorney:

James P Attorney
Law Office of Joe P Attorney
12 Office Park
Anywhere, IL 62201
(618) 555-5555

The case was assigned case number 06-30006.

In most instances, the filing of the bankruptcy case automatically stays certain collection and other actions against the debtor and the debtor's property. Under certain circumstances, the stay may be limited to 30 days or not exist at all, although the debtor can request the court to extend or impose a stay. If you attempt to collect a debt or take other action in violation of the Bankruptcy Code, you may be penalized. Consult a lawyer to determine your rights in this case.

If you would like to view the bankruptcy petition and other documents filed by the debtor, they are available at our *Internet* home page <http://ecf-test.ilsb.uscourts.gov/> or at the Clerk's Office, 750 Missouri Ave, East St. Louis, IL 62201.

You may be a creditor of the debtor. If so, you will receive an additional notice from the court setting forth important deadlines.

Wayne A. Bannert
Clerk, U.S. Bankruptcy Court



Figure T

STEP 17 Filing Fee Payment Screen

- View the section titled Paying Filing Fees Online for more information and to view a demonstration of the fee payment process.

STEP 18 Review the section titled Uploading A Creditor Matrix